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## **CRCG Events Calendar**

### **CRCG System of Care Bridge Call Series:**

**March 17** – 2-3 p.m. CT

**April 21** – 2-3 p.m. CT

**May 19** – 2-3 p.m. CT

**June 16** – 2-3 p.m. CT

## **CRCG State Office Updates**

### **2020 CRCG Regional Collaboration Summits**

The State CRCG Office along with CRCG partner agencies are hosting the 2020 CRCG Regional Collaboration Summits which will be offered in seven regional locations across the state. The summits will offer a unique opportunity for participants to come together with other community leaders from diverse fields and backgrounds to collaborate across systems, build stronger communities, and learn about statewide programs. The events are open to CRCGs, state and local agencies, service providers, community members, and individuals and families in each region. Please join us for this exciting opportunity to collaborate with other individuals across your region!

### **Dates and Locations:**

April 14, 2020 - Lubbock, Texas (postponed)

April 15, 2020 - Midland, Texas (postponed)

June 11, 2020 - Conroe, Texas

July 16, 2020 - Flower Mound, Texas

July 17, 2020 - Palestine, Texas

August 3, 2020 - Georgetown, Texas

August 14, 2020 - Corpus Christi, Texas

The State CRCG Office and partner agencies have been monitoring the COVID-19 situation and following state and federal agency guidance to

ensure the safety of our staff and those with whom we come in contact. Due to this, we will be postponing the first two CRCG Regional Collaboration Summits in Lubbock and Midland on April 14-15, 2020.

We will continue to monitor the rapidly evolving situation regarding COVID-19 and will provide updates regarding these events, including when they will be rescheduled, on the registration page linked below.

### **Registration:**

Each summit is free, but space is very limited, so you must register to reserve your spot. Registration will close when filled or one week prior to each event. Additional details for all the Regional Collaboration Summits, including locations and start and end times, can be found on the registration page.

[Register on the TJJD Training Academy website](#)

## **Legislative Updates**

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### **Thank You for Providing Data for the 2020 Legislative Report**

The State CRCG Office would like to thank all CRCGs for their time in submitting data for the biennial CRCG legislative report. The report will include a Texas System of Care (TxSOC) CRCG-informed recommendations section, which is mandated by Senate Bill (S.B.) 241, 86th Legislature, Regular Session, 2019.

The biennial CRCG legislative report will cover calendar year 2019 to align the report with future legislative sessions. The report includes the number of persons served through CRCGs, outcomes of provided services, barriers to providing effective services, and information to improve the delivery of services to persons needing multiagency coordination. Previous reports can be found on the [CRCG website reports page](#).

The TxSOC CRCG-informed recommendations section will include summarized evaluations of the provision of SOC services for children with severe emotional disturbances in each CRCG community. It will also include recommendations for overcoming barriers to the provision of SOC services and improving the integration of those services. You can view additional information about S.B. 241 on the [Texas Legislature Online website](#).

This combined report will allow CRCGs to provide valuable feedback about services and supports for individuals and their families within their

communities to the Office of the Governor, Texas Legislature, CRCG partner agencies, and HHSC in 2020. The feedback provided could assist in increasing collaboration and coordination, family and community-based support, training opportunities, and funding among local communities. Once the report is completed, it will be available on the [CRCG website reports page](#).

## **CRCG Site Visits**

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### **Lampasas County CRCG**

The State CRCG Office would like to thank Lampasas County CRCG members, and Danna Smith, chair of the Mills and San Saba counties CRCGs, for coming together to identify new leadership and discuss the group's sustainability. Members representing a variety of local organizations spoke about the need for a CRCG in their community, and a leadership team stepped up to ensure that the Lampasas County group will continue. The state office appreciates your support and dedication to your community!

### **Brush Country CRCG**

The State CRCG Office would like to thank the Brush Country CRCG for welcoming us to their meeting. We enjoyed learning about Brush Country's best practices, such as prioritizing community involvement and resources, and recognizing and celebrating the strengths and accomplishments of the children and families you serve. Thank you for sharing your time, experiences, and best practices.

## Resources

### *CRCG website*

The [CRCG website](#) has great resources for leaders and members, including guidebooks covering all things CRCGs, and resources for families and community members.

### *Webinar Recordings*

The State CRCG Office webinars bring valuable resources and information to CRCG partners and members. Click the links below to view previous recordings.

[Veterans Mental Health Coordination and Programs \(VMHCP\)](#)

[CRCG Data Collection System Training](#)

[Statewide Services and Supports for Youth and Young Adults with Mental Health Needs](#)

## Sharing Is Caring

Please share our newsletter with your colleagues or anyone that might benefit from this information!

## Contact Us

We would love to hear from you! If you have thoughts, concerns, comments, ideas or anything else that you'd like to share, please contact the State CRCG Office.

[CRCG@hhsc.state.tx.us](mailto:CRCG@hhsc.state.tx.us)

**512-206-5255**

## Spotlight on CRCGs

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The State CRCG Office acknowledges efforts and successes of different CRCGs in this spotlight section. To share success stories for upcoming newsletters, send an email to [CRCG@hhsc.state.tx.us](mailto:CRCG@hhsc.state.tx.us).

### **2019 CRCG Recognition Awards**

The State CRCG Office would like to congratulate and thank all the nominees and winners of the 2019 CRCG Recognition Awards.

## Anderson and Cherokee Counties CRCG



*Left to right: CRCG Co-Chair Marie Page; CRCG Chair Janette Maldonado-Johnson; and CRCG Co-Chair Susan Dorsey*

Congratulations to the Anderson and Cherokee Counties CRCG for receiving one of the 2019 Outstanding CRCG Awards. They were recognized for their ability to bring together a diverse group of organizations in an area

with limited resources and for their dedication to finding community-based services and supports for all ages. They have been a consistent coalition in the East Texas region for the past 16 years, with Janette Maldonado-Johnson leading the effort, along with her co-chairs, Marie Page and Susan Dorsey. Janette said upon receiving the award, "we are very grateful to receive this award specially because Cherokee and Anderson Counties are very small and rural areas with limited resources. The CRCG comes together to strive and provide resources to the families in need. It is an honor and a privilege to receive this award for the dedication we have shown to our Communities." The State CRCG Office would like to say thank you to Janette and ACCESS Local Mental Health Authority for their invitation to present the award and their wonderful hospitality.

## Bosque County CRCG



*The Bosque County CRCG*

Congratulations to the Bosque County CRCG for receiving one of the 2019 Outstanding CRCG Awards. The State CRCG Office had the opportunity to present the award and recognize the CRCG for their excellence and dedication to improving the lives of individuals and families in their community. The award specifically recognized one of their chairs, Alicia Lopez, on her phenomenal leadership and exceptional efforts to encourage collaboration.

## Eastland County CRCG



*Left to right: CRCG Chair Rhonda Pipkin, and CRCG member, Robin Carouth*

Congratulations to Eastland County CRCG for receiving one of the 2019 Outstanding CRCG Awards. Special thanks to CRCG chair, Rhonda Pipkin, for welcoming the State CRCG Office to their CRCG's February meeting to present the award. CRCG member, Robin Carouth, was commended for her dedication and passion to serving children and families in her local community. She was recognized for her ability to bring people together, especially during emergency CRCG meetings, and get problems solved.

Robin has found creative solutions, such as martial arts and equine therapy, for children with diverse needs. Overall, she has been a vital member of the CRCG to help ensure successful outcomes of the children and families served by Eastland county CRCG.

## Upcoming CRCG Events

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### **CRCG Bridge Call Series**

The State CRCG Office offers a monthly bridge call for local CRCG leaders and members to share ideas, discuss challenges, and network. Beginning in March, the State CRCG Office, in partnership with the Texas System of Care, will begin a four-part series focused on system of care values and how to incorporate them into your CRCG. The series will be held every third Tuesday of the month at 2:00 p.m. (CT) from March to June and will be hosted through GoToWebinar.

[Register for the four-part system of care series here.](#)

- March 17, 2:00-3:00 p.m. CT / 1:00-2:00 p.m. MT
- April 21, 2:00-3:00 p.m. CT / 1:00-2:00 p.m. MT
- May 19, 2:00-3:00 p.m. CT / 1:00-2:00 p.m. MT
- June 16, 2:00-3:00 p.m. CT / 1:00-2:00 p.m. MT

## **CRCG Webinar Series**

The State CRCG Office offers webinars that cover resources, programs, and technical assistance to support CRCG efforts. A notice will be sent to all CRCGs and a registration link will be posted on the [CRCG website Resources page](#) when each webinar is scheduled. There are no upcoming webinars scheduled at this time. Recordings for past webinars, including the March CRCG webinar “CRCG Regional Collaboration Summits Informational Webinar,” are available on the [CRCG website Resources page](#).

## **CRCG Partner Agency Updates**

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### **Health and Human Services Commission**

#### **Early Childhood Intervention (ECI)**

The Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) program is a statewide program that provides early intervention for infants and toddlers from birth to 36 months who have a developmental delay or disability. ECI services support families as they learn how to help their children grow and learn. Here’s a short “ECI At-A Glance.”

#### **Did you know...**

- A newborn’s brain is 25 percent of the weight of an adult’s brain.
- The birth-to-three period is the fastest rate of brain development across the entire human life span.
- By age three, a child's brain has reached nearly 90 percent of its adult size.

To learn more, check out this video on [Early Brain Development](#).

#### **Did you know... In 2019,**

- 59 percent of the referrals made to ECI came from the medical and health services community.
- 23 percent of referrals made to ECI came from parents/family/friends.
- 18 percent of referrals made to ECI came from other sources such as social services or educational agencies.
- ECI served 60,596 young Texans in fiscal year 2019.



### Did you know...

There are three ways a child can qualify for ECI services:

- First, if the child has a medical diagnosis.
- Second, if the child has an auditory impairment or a visual impairment.
- Third, if the child has a developmental delay.

### Did you know...

- ECI services are provided by licensed and credentialed staff.
- ECI services could include: occupational, physical, speech and language therapies.
- ECI services are individualized and family centered.
- ECI services are provided where the child lives, learns or plays.
- ECI services are provided to families of all income levels.
- ECI has local contractors throughout the state and every zip code is covered.
- Anyone who has a concern about a child's development can [make a referral](#) to ECI.

To find out more about ECI services, call the HHS Office of the Ombudsman at 877-787-8999 or visit the [ECI web page](#).

### Texas System of Care

The **Children's Mental Health Awareness Day (CMHAD) Texas Toolkit** is a statewide campaign developed by HHSC's [Texas System of Care](#) to shed light on stigma, and is designed to help communities and organizations hold their own Awareness Day events during the month of May—Children's Mental Health Awareness Month. The event [toolkit](#) is updated yearly and features planning checklists, themed artwork, social media messaging, media release templates, sample resolutions, and more!

This year's CMHAD Texas Toolkit theme is "**Power in Numbers,**" because community collaboration is the key to better address the needs of Texas children, and there is value in sharing lived experiences with others.

## **Suicide Prevention Team**

The Suicide Prevention Team, located in the Office of Mental Health Coordination at HHSC, is dedicated to supporting suicide prevention efforts across the state. Each team member has a unique role to support suicide prevention, intervention, and post-suicide care services in the public mental health system. Learn more about the Suicide Prevention Team below and contact any of the team members if you have questions about initiatives they support.

### ***Jenna Heise, MA, National Board-Certified Counselor***

State Suicide Prevention Coordinator & Team Lead

[jenna.heise@hhsc.state.tx.us](mailto:jenna.heise@hhsc.state.tx.us)

Oversees the state's suicide prevention team and provides support for suicide prevention, intervention and post-suicide care services in the public mental health system while coordinating the framework across state, local, and community systems in suicide prevention and suicide-care. Mrs. Heise leads implementation of suicide prevention legislation, primary oversight for suicide prevention programs and initiatives as well as federal grants. She is an integral member of both Mayor's Challenges in Austin and Houston; the Governor's Challenge to Prevent Suicide Among Service Members, Veterans, and their Families; and the President's Roadmap to Empower Veterans and End the National Tragedy of Suicide (PREVENTS). She is a national expert serving on state and national advisory boards where she is working with the Department of Defense, The Veterans Health Administration, Centers for Disease Control, The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration, The Suicide Prevention Resource Center, and the American Foundation of Suicide Prevention.

### ***Jennifer Cruisinger, MA, LPC-S***

Youth Suicide Grant Project Director

[Jennifer.cruisinger@hhsc.state.tx.us](mailto:Jennifer.cruisinger@hhsc.state.tx.us)

Oversees the five-year Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)-awarded Resilient Youth – Safer Environments (RYSE) grant which will create a comprehensive Suicide Safer Early Intervention and Prevention (SSEIP) system aimed to support transition-aged youth and the organizations that provide services to them, including Texas schools, mental health programs, institutes of higher learning, juvenile justice systems, substance use programs, and foster care systems, beginning in Santa Fe, Texas, Galveston County.

***Jennifer Haussler Garing, MS***

Suicide Policy, Programs, and Outcomes Coordinator

[Jennifer.hausslergaring@hhsc.state.tx.us](mailto:Jennifer.hausslergaring@hhsc.state.tx.us)

Jennifer is a trained epidemiologist whose past work included coordination and analysis of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) and analysis of the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) while at the Center for Health Statistics at the Department of State Health Services and is currently providing all suicide data analysis for House Bill 3980.

***Laura Hernandez Gold, LCSW-S***

Suicide Prevention & Project AWARE Co-Coordinator

[laura.gold02@hhsc.state.tx.us](mailto:laura.gold02@hhsc.state.tx.us)

Assists in the coordination of the Texas Education Agency's five-year SAMHSA-awarded Advancing Wellness and Resilience in Education(AWARE) grant which will build and expand the capacity to promote the healthy development of school-aged youth, prevent youth violence, and strengthen school mental health resources and services, beginning in 15 school districts within the Hurricane Harvey impacted area, as well as promote suicide prevention and suicide safer care practices throughout Texas.

***Ehab Mustafa, PhD, LPC***

Veterans Suicide Prevention & Mental Health Programs Coordinator

[ehab.mustafa@hhsc.state.tx.us](mailto:ehab.mustafa@hhsc.state.tx.us)

Coordinates the veteran focused suicide prevention efforts, in collaboration with the Suicide Prevention Team, and provides background, experience, and knowledge to accurately inform efforts as they relate to service members, veterans and their families (SMVF) in Texas.

***Tammy Weppelman, MS, LPC-S***

Suicide Care Coordinator

[tammy.weppelman@hhsc.state.tx.us](mailto:tammy.weppelman@hhsc.state.tx.us)

Oversees the Suicide Care Initiative (SCI) which is a Mental Health Block Grant-funded project whose focus is to enhance effective suicide prevention and suicide care practices throughout the Local Mental Health Authorities (LMHAs) and Local Behavioral Health Authorities (LBHAs) in Texas through implementation of the nationally recognized Zero Suicide framework, and to increase the capacity of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline-affiliated LMHAs to provide support for those in crisis in Texas.

## **Suicide Prevention Wallet Cards**

The Suicide Prevention Team created wallet cards that include warning signs, ways to help, and important resources. Please click on the links below to download a copy.



[Suicide Prevention Wallet Card English](#)  
[Suicide Prevention Wallet Card Spanish](#)

## **Texas Workforce Commission**

### **Pathways to Reentry Program**

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) is partnering with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, Lower Rio Grande Valley Workforce Development Board dba Workforce Solutions and Workforce Solutions Cameron to implement the Pathways to Reentry program. The program is funded by a \$1.225 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor and is designed to improve employment outcomes for offenders, 25 years or older, who live in or are returning to the target area of Cameron, Willacy, and Hidalgo Counties.

The goal of the Pathways to Reentry program is to reduce recidivism by placing program participants in self-sustaining employment, an apprenticeship, or training program that leads to an industry recognized credential linked to in-demand and target occupations as determined by the local workforce development board. Sexual offenders are not eligible to participate in the program.

This program features dedicated case managers who work to develop and navigate a customized plan to address specific needs and barriers to employment through services including, but not limited to, job readiness training, adult education and literacy, and financial and non-financial incentives for reaching goals and progress milestones.

For more information about the Pathways to Reentry program, please email TWC Customer Relations at [customers@twc.state.tx.us](mailto:customers@twc.state.tx.us).

## Other News and Events

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### Conferences

#### **Texas Primary Care Consortium Annual Summit**

*June 4-5, 2020*

*Austin, TX*

The Texas Primary Care Consortium Annual Summit is a unique event that serves as a learning lab, collaborative gathering, and catalyst for primary care transformation in Texas. Key stakeholders and leaders from varying sectors convene to examine and pursue shared solutions to the complex challenges presented by our current healthcare system, including: primary care access; care delivery issues; coordination, continuity, and comprehensiveness of care; administrative burdens; and payment issues.

While there is no “one-size-fits-all” answer for the complex problems of our healthcare system, the summit provides a platform to identify, examine, and pursue shared solutions to common issues experienced across sectors. Each participant becomes a shared owner of the collective impact made on the journey toward transforming the primary care landscape.

[Register for the summit on the Texas Primary Care Consortium website.](#)

#### **37<sup>th</sup> Annual Texas Network of Youth Services Conference on Services to Youth and Families**

*June 23-26, 2020*

*Houston, TX*

This conference provides a valuable learning experience for youth and the professionals who work with them across a variety of systems, including juvenile justice, education, child welfare and more. It provides hands-on learning opportunities on building resilience, developing cultural competency, understanding important cutting-edge practices such as trauma-informed care, and much more.

[Register for the conference on the TNOYS website.](#)

## **20<sup>th</sup> Annual Partners in Prevention Conference**

*October 20-22, 2020*

*Houston, TX*

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services' Prevention and Early Intervention program is hosting the 20<sup>th</sup> Annual Partners in Prevent (PIP) Conference. The PIP Conference is the largest annual gathering of prevention and early intervention professionals in Texas. The conference attracts parent educators, youth service providers, civic leaders, policy advocates, researchers and others with a professional interest in child and family well-being, youth development and juvenile justice.

The 2020 theme - Intersections: 20 Years of Navigating Families to Success - honors the journeys of prevention and early intervention professionals across Texas as they seek out and connect with resources in their communities to reduce child abuse, enhance school readiness, and improve the social-emotional health of children and families. Attendees will return to their communities with new connections, directions and road maps to success for the children, youth and families they serve.

[For more information, visit the PIP conference website.](#)